

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 6254

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR IN PK

SUBJECT: DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER COMMENTS ON INDO-PAK
RELATIONS; DEFENSE MINISTER, ON "THREAT" TO INDIA.

1. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER BIPIN PAL DAS TOLD THE UPPER HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT MAY 9 THAT THERE WAS NO THREAT TO INDIA'S SECURITY FROM PAKISTAN. "BUT WE CANNOT BE COMPLACENT IN VIEW OF MR. BHUTTO'S INTERVIEW WITH THE WASHINGTON POST HOLDING OUT THREATS OF WAR AND THE US LIFTING OF THE ARMS EMBARGO," HE REPORTEDLY ADDED. DAS SAID THAT BHUTTO HAD RECENTLY ASSURED MRS. GANDHI THAT PAKISTAN WAS COMMITTED TO IMPLEMENT THE SIMLA AGREEMENT. "IN VIEW OF THIS ASSURANCE, WE THINK THERE IS EVERY POSSIBILITY OF MARCHING FORWARD FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SIMLA AGREEMENT," DAS SAID, NOTING THAT INDIA WAS COMMITTED TO THAT AGREEMENT "AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE." DAS ALSO REPORTEDLY OBSERVED THAT PAKISTAN HAD TONED DOWN ITS ANTI-INDIA CAMPAIGN FOLLOWING THESE LATEST ASSURANCES TO INDIA. EARLIER DAS SAID THAT PAKISTAN HAD VIOLATED THE SIMLA AGREEMENT BY DISSEMINATING ANTI-INDIA PROPAGANDA, ENDING THE STATUS OF HUNZA AS A SEPARATE ENTITY AND BY INTERFERING IN INDIA'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS WHEN IT CALLED FOR A HARTAL IN KASHMIR.

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PAGE 02 NEW DE 06254 091335Z

2. SEPARATELY, DEFENSE MINISTER SWARAN SINGH TOLD THE

UPPER HOUSE THAT THE THREAT TO INDIA'S BORDERS REMAINED
PRIMARILY FROM CHINA AND PAKISTAN. THIS WAS A WRITTEN
REPLY IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION WHETHER THE PRIME MINISTER
HAD STATED IN JAMMU ON APRIL 14 THAT INDIA WAS FACING A
TWIN SECURITY THREAT FROM THE NORTHERN BORDERS AND ALSO FROM
THE SEA, AND, IF SO, WHICH COUNTRIES WERE THE SOURCE OF
THOSE THREATS. THE DEFENSE MINISTER REPORTEDLY SAID THAT
THE ESCALATION OF GREAT POWER MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE INDIA

OCEAN CAN AGGRAVATE A TENSION AND INCREASE THE RISK OF
PRESSURES BEING BUILT IN THE REGION.

3. THE DEFENSE MINISTER REPORTEDLY REPLIED TO ANOTHER
WRITTEN QUESTION BY SAYING THAT HE HAD NO INFORMATION TO
CORROBORATE PRESS REPORTS THAT IRAN WAS CONTEMPLATING SUPPLY
OF F-5 AIRCRAFT TO PAKISTAN.SCHNEIDER

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